

Richard A. Smith  
Chief Executive Officer

The logo for Securus Technologies, featuring the word "SECURUS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font above the word "Technologies" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, all contained within a blue square.

October 26, 2015

VIA ECFS AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

Chairman Tom Wheeler  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20054  
Tom.Wheeler@fcc.gov

Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20054  
Mignon.Clyburn@fcc.gov

Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20054  
Jessica.Rosenworcel@fcc.gov

Commissioner Ajit Pai  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20054  
Ajit.Pai@fcc.gov

Commissioner Michael O'Rielly  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20054  
Michael.O'Rielly@fcc.gov

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

Securus Technologies, Inc. ("Securus"), through counsel and pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(a)(1), and with the permission of the Wireline Competition Bureau, submits this letter to apprise the Commission of threats made against its executives based on the public statements it has made regarding Inmate Calling Services ("ICS"). These statements either misstate or ignore the record and have incited public opinion to dangerous levels.

**From the FCC News Release on October 22, 2015:**

"With the cost of a call sometimes ballooning to \$14.00 per minute once inside prison walls, the FCC for the first time capped rates . . ."

Although highly unlikely, there may be an isolated incident – out of millions of calls – where someone paid \$14.00 per minute, but the FCC clearly understands that Securus' average rate per minute is approximately \$.21, not \$14.00. That fabrication misuses their office and public trust, and actually places those in our industry in harm's way. If I were an inmate or had someone in jail, I would be enraged by \$14.00 per minute. But we actually average 1.5% of what the FCC quoted! What the FCC quoted in the press is not an accident – it deliberately puts us in a bad position, and we do not deserve that. We deserve better from the FCC.

There have been death threats against company executives on social media sites related to the \$14 per minute, because the perception now is that every call costs \$14 per minute and ICS providers are making "billions of dollars in profits." *See attachment and below.*

**Another FCC quote from the same FCC News Release:**

"Eliminates unnecessary fees by capping or banning burdensome ancillary service charges, which can add nearly 40% to the cost of a single call."

This is another clear misrepresentation of the cost data. Clearly, the FCC knows that ancillary fees represent approximately 10% of our total charges – and much less than you would see on a typical telephone or cable bill. The 40% quoted is a sensationally high number – but not accurate at all. The FCC continues to paint our industry in a bad light using baseless statistics and a suspect legal foundation.

**As a result of these statements, below are just a few of threats that are appearing on Internet forums:**

"Richard Smith and Brian Oliver have been added to my list of people I would beat senseless...if given the opportunity. If they were trapped in a burning building, I'd throw gasoline on the fire. They are a cancer of this earth, and deserve to suffer in this world and beyond for what they're doing to prisoners and their families."

"...bastards are going to be gunned down in the streets. mock my words."

"Some of these ceos [sic] need to be beaten down by former convicts, or whatever these criminals think is fair."

"Why don't we find out where these executives live and do something about this?"

It is clear to me that the FCC has used information deliberately that is inaccurate – to mislead the media and the public into believing that Securus deliberately hurts poor people cares nothing about inmates and their families. To the contrary: We complete 144 million calls per year to maintain relationships between inmates and their families. We develop tablet solutions for inmates to make education, religion, grievances, and commissary solutions easier to access. We save thousands of lives per year; we prevent and solve hundreds of thousands of crimes per year; we keep inmates, officers, victims, witnesses, and all of society safe. We are proud of the way we serve all of our constituencies. We deserve an FCC that tells the truth, not distorts the truth or issues partial truths to further their own egos.

More importantly, the FCC should not make misleading statements that result in threats to the lives of our executives and their families.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Richard A. Smith, dated 10/26/15.

Richard A. Smith  
Chief Executive Officer  
Securus Technologies, Inc.

Attachment

Cc: Gigi Sohn, Counselor to Chairman Wheeler  
Rebekah Goodheart, Legal Advisor to Commissioner Clyburn  
Travis Litman, Legal Advisor to Commissioner Rosenworcel  
Nicholas Degani, Legal Advisor to Commissioner Pai  
Amy Bender, Legal Advisor to Commissioner O'Rielly  
Julie Veach, Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Pamela Arluk, Acting Deputy Chief, Pricing Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Lynne Engledow, Acting Deputy Chief, Pricing Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Rhonda Lien, Pricing Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Bakari Middleton, Attorney, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Gil Strobel, Attorney, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Thom Parisi, Attorney, Wireline Competition Bureau  
Christine Sandquist, Attorney, Pricing Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau  
*All via electronic mail*



Employee Self Service xPrison phone compa x

https://www.reddit.com/r/news/comments/3pyn6r/prison\_phone\_companies\_fight\_for\_right\_to\_charge/?sort=new&limit=500

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5705

Prison phone companies fight for right to charge inmates \$14 a minute (arstechnica.com)

submitted 2 days ago by coupdetaco

1574 comments share

top 500 comments

sorted by: new▼

[-] Cojemoss1 point 1 day ago

Only in the USA where they suck every penny out of those who have the absolute least.

permalink

[-] monomach4 points 1 day ago

Sounds like the real criminals are on the outside and own telephone companies.

permalink

[-] zemallo-1 points 1 day ago

Makes them pay for their own stays in prison so us law abiding citizens don't have to. Go for it.

permalink

[-] Pumpk1nP1e4 points 1 day ago

You must buy \$25 cards to charge the call, so the real cost is \$25/minute. Balance is non-refundable.

permalink

[-] VowOfKsitigarbha1 point 1 day ago

More crimes = More prisoners = More whatever they charge for basic living need= More money. Maybe it's time to run a private sewer company so you can charge \$50 every time some prisoner use the restroom. Food company that charge \$100 per pound of rice.

Sounds like a great business to me. It would be even better if education/healthcare price can be higher and wage is lower so most people won't be able to afford them without committing crimes. Their family will be working hard to pay anyway.

That's exactly why we cannot elect someone like Sanders as the president. So many business like this will be crushed and so many people will lose their jobs. /s

permalink

[-] pohatu1 point 1 day ago

Some of these ceos need to be beaten down by former convicts, or whatever these criminals think is fair.

permalink

[-] LAULitics2 points 1 day ago

Correction. Prison telecommunication providers fight for right to extort the incarcerated.

permalink

[-] manbearbatman3 points 1 day ago

I get it that these guys are criminals but 14 dollars a minute is completely unreasonable.

permalink

[-] mtefite1 point 1 day ago

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Do prison phone companies call them a captive audience?  
permalink

[-] TexasWithADollarsign 1 point 1 day ago

Richard Smith and Brian Oliver have been added to my list of people I would beat senseless Bear Jew-style if given the opportunity. If they were trapped in a burning building, I'd throw gasoline on the fire. They are a cancer of this earth, and deserve to suffer in this world and beyond for what they're doing to prisoners and their families.

permalink

[-] uselessDM -1 points 1 day ago

Why should they give up the right without a fight? What's in it for them? If your boss says he is only paying you half from now on and with the rest he is buying some homeless people food, would you say yes?

permalink

[-] shotleft 6 points 1 day ago

I suppose you can charge whatever you want in a captive market.

permalink

[-] BronsonBuster 4 points 1 day ago

"They could be left with the lowest quality of phone service?" Motherfucker it's a land line and its 2015. You're not providing fucking healthcare to them you're a middleman to a fucking land line.

permalink

[-] SpeakerToRedditors -3 points 1 day ago

That is only 4 cents more than TMobiles pay as you go plan. It's actually reasonable for a no contract calling rate.

permalink

[-] hawksaber 5 points 1 day ago

GTL CEO Brian Oliver claimed that the FCC has *"hurt inmates and their families—the very people they set out to help. While they might see lower per-minute rates, they could be left with either the lowest quality of phone service or no phone service at all."*

My God... does this guy actually believe the nuclear-level b.s. he just spewed out of his mouth??? How does this man sleep at night?

permalink

[-] Syearsinthefuture -3 points 1 day ago

what's the point of prison if they have the same privledges as the gen pop?

permalink

[-] HouseOfKrazees 3 points 1 day ago

GTL can go fuck themselves.

permalink

[-] FluffyBunnyHugs 4 points 1 day ago

These scam artists need to be thrown in prison for a very long time.

permalink

[-] jon\_hobbit -3 points 1 day ago

Actually that's \$1 cheaper than the data your paying lol...

If I got a call and it said you want to pay \$14/minute I'd hang up so fast

But in other news, People are paying \$15/gb for mobile data... lol

Both need to be made illegal.

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Saudi prince arrested at Beirut Airport after discovery of 2 tons of drugs



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[~] **Narian** 2 points 1 day ago

The 13th Amendment abolished slavery for everyone BUT CRIMINALS.  
These companies DESERVE TO BE RUN OUT OF THE FUCKING COUNTRY  
The CEOs and their families NEED TO BE OSTRACIZED AND EXILED FROM THE COUNTRY  
Might sound drastic but that's only because the status quo is to coddle, enable and promote liars, cheats and thieves - as long as they wear a suit.

permalink

[~] **Gremmward** 0 points 1 day ago

Good, they shouldn't have the chance to even make phone calls.

permalink

[~] **zxybot9** 3 points 1 day ago

Prisons; the only growth industry in the U.S. for decades.

permalink

[~] **d121212** 0 points 1 day ago

If it was cheap I wonder how they would accommodate all the prisoners wanting to be on the phone. I would imagine certain people would always get pressured into getting off the phone immediately or wouldn't be making calls at all. Maybe that's the case already. I really need to volunteer in a prison someday so I can have any idea what it's like beyond what people tell me.

permalink

[~] **biped91** -1 points 1 day ago

Two people at the ends of the line, talking. the company tugging at the wire, at the center of the composition.

permalink

[~] **BadgerRush** 3 points 1 day ago

In this case I think that, in addition to the FCC, the FTC should also be fighting the prisons on this. If the USA had decent consumer protection laws (or enforced the good laws that are already there), then this would be a clear case of illegal abuse of market power.

The inmates as customers are denied the option of provider, instead they are forced to use one specific company for all their telephony services (sometimes the prison itself, sometimes a third party). That creates an imbalance of power in the customer-provider relation, and abusing such an imbalance to charge prices that are much higher than the market value should be classed as illegal abuse of market power.

Basically the same laws that make "surge pricing" illegal should be applied to this "constant surge pricing".

permalink

[~] **rgordill** 1 point 1 day ago

What is the basis of the lawsuit, though? You can't sue an Agency in an Article III court and expect to get anything out of the court except, "The Supreme Court in Chevron tells us that we have to give deference to the Agency's rulemaking power." Agencies destroy businesses with the promulgation of new rules, and the courts are just indifferent.

permalink

[~] **vangogh11** 2 points 1 day ago

Can anybody guess which party the 2 dissenters were from? You know, the party that for some reason ALWAYS votes in favor of corporate greed, no matter how ridiculous? It's getting hard to stay open minded, and not just call the Republicans the party of evil.

permalink

[~] **BOBASA** -1 points 1 day ago

discussions in /r/news

307 points · 127 comments

Saudi prince arrested at Beirut Airport after discovery of 2 tons of drugs

permalink

[-] reedsparks -1 points 2 days ago

Why don't we find out where these executives live and do something about this? This is where 4chan has the real balls to affect change

permalink

[-] RyeRoan 1 point 2 days ago

Ah yes, let's harass these people and their families; as though somehow 95% of us wouldn't also try and maximise profits if we ran our own businesses.

PEOPLE are not the problem, it's the systems that we have set up. People like to present big corporations as evil, when under a different set of circumstances they would have done the same thing.

Making someone's life hell makes everything worse, and doesn't contribute to making this situation any better.

permalink parent

[-] reedsparks 1 point 1 day ago

Fine. Let's go to Washington, burn it down and start over

permalink parent

[-] wowgate 17 points 2 days ago

The FCC's decision "create[s] significant financial instability in the industry and will pose a threat to service at many of the nation's smaller jails," GTL said. "Consequently, GTL is left with no choice but to seek judicial review of the FCC's order."

If that isn't the most slime-ball thing I've read ever read. Maybe a bit over the top, but the obtuseness at play here makes me question their every motive.

permalink

[-] Cogswobble 2 points 2 days ago

lol, it's always so dumb when the main argument in a lawsuit is "this puts our business plan at risk".

permalink parent

[-] Dem0nic\_Jew 3 points 2 days ago\*

So if the bank makes money from the land, and the land holders have a large facility generating contentious revenue for the bank, which in turn feeds the federal government's ability to produce welfare and services. The whole time the government is printing the money to give to the bank, to give to the land holder so he can do what he wants with "his property".

This whole system is malevolent. Money is time they say, but who exactly are they?

permalink

[-] my\_third\_throwaway\_n 7 points 2 days ago

ITT: "it's all capitalism's fault!!! boo free markets!!"

in reality: government doesn't allow prisoners to use any competing phone companies. This is the exact opposite of a free market: it's a government granted and enforced monopoly. There is no competition at all.

permalink

[-] RareMajority 1 point 1 day ago

Having multiple phone companies providing service to a single building is infeasible. It's just like trying to have multiple electric companies providing service to the same block. Some things by the nature of the infrastructure necessary to have them, necessitates monopolies. In these situations, government regulation is necessary to prevent companies from gouging their customers.

permalink parent

[-] cGxvd21 6 points 2 days ago

Prison is the new slavery



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Even individual guards piss off inmates, you think a hugr company would sweat about it?  
permalink parent  
[-] ZeroTonk 41 points 2 days ago  
I wish there was a real-life batman, and that he would start taking out people like prison profiteers.  
permalink  
[-] D0ct0rJ 1 point 1 day ago  
Need the Green Arrow. "You have failed this country."  
permalink parent  
[-] the\_sharpest\_knife 1 point 2 days ago  
I "wouldn't see a thing".  
permalink parent  
[-] OrkfaellerX 15 points 2 days ago  
Thats not the kind of Superhero Batman is. Batman beats up street thugs and then throws them into horribly run, inefficient, privatised prisons and asylums.  
permalink parent  
[-] ZeroTonk 2 points 1 day ago  
Well, to be fair, his main competitor is Iron Man, also orphaned and possessing no superhuman powers, Iron Man has a hobby of threatening the most powerful terrorist in the world and then just chilling in his undefended beach-front property like nothing is about to happen.  
permalink parent  
[-] bittah\_prophet 1 point 1 day ago  
Well he also invests billions into Gotham, and one of the first things he did after becoming Batman was dismantle the mafia and corruption in the police department. With his fists.  
permalink parent  
[-] SatNav 1 point 2 days ago  
Be the change you want to see in the world.  
permalink parent  
[-] ZeroTonk 3 points 2 days ago\*  
I don't have time to write ALL the software, for EVERYONE, OK!?  
[edit] lolwut  
permalink parent  
[-] alanegrudere 12 points 2 days ago  
the things that happen now start looking like when robin hood and other outlaws took it to their own hands.  
it wont be long since this bastards are going to be gunned down in the streets. mock my words.  
permalink parent  
[-] jrussell424 0 points 2 days ago  
I don't know if this is a typo, or if you have misheard this saying before. If it's just a typo, please disregard, but I'm going to post the correct saying in case others don't know it.  
The correct phrase is "mark my words", as in "Take note. What I'm saying will be proven true".  
Again, I apologize if you already know the correct saying. Just ignore me, if that's the case.  
permalink parent  
[-] tblizz3317 1 point 2 days ago  
to be had that I felt forced to this day? Only back are worse than not being to do the small X adjusted by the

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Saudi prince arrested at Beirut Airport after discovery of 2 tons of drugs